

Progress!

Parents & Friends Inc.

March 2012 Creatively Serving People with Developmental Disabilities Since 1955

PFI Executive Director 1975-2002

George Griffith reflects on his 27 years with Parents and Friends, Inc.



During the mid to latter part of the 20th century, the civil rights movement for those with developmental disabilities was at a peak. George Griffith entered the scene as director of Parent and Friends, Inc. in 1975. Before George retired in 2002, he saw Parents and Friends through sweeping and positive changes.

George Griffith became Executive Director of Parents and Friends at 35 years old. He had worked for several years as a social worker in the bay area but wanted a change. He moved to Fort Bragg with his wife Lorraine who was a teacher. He held various jobs including working as a custodian at the Fort Bragg Middle School. A PFI Board member told George that founder, and then director, Dodie Scott wanted to retire and suggested that he might be interested in applying for her position. George had never directed an organization nor had he worked with people with disabilities. But, yes, he was interested. He volunteered at the Cypress Street Activity

Center for a month or so to see what it was all about. He liked what he saw, applied for the director's position and was hired. George led PFI for 27 years.

In 1975, Parents and Friends served 9 adults in an Activity program. The annual budget was \$60,000. The Paul Bunyan Activity Center had a homey, rather sheltered environment. The clients worked at craft projects that they sold locally. They made pot holders, sea urchin shell night lights, cobweb wands, macramé and many other things. They also participated in recreational activities such as bowling and swimming. There were volunteers and good community support.

When George retired in 2002, PFI served 45 clients and an operating budget of \$1,500,000. Many clients at the Cypress Street Center worked in a professional woodshop creating their Adirondack Design outdoor furniture and selling it nation wide. The folks that worked at Adirondack Designs were seen as employees not as disabled clients. They were working with real tools producing beautiful and valuable products.

At the time George arrived on the scene, there were demands all over the country for better services for those with disabilities. The Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Act (AB 846) is a California law passed in 1977, that gave people with developmental dis-

abilities the right to services and supports in order to live a more independent and normal life. This legislation declared that persons with developmental disabilities have the same legal rights and responsibilities guaranteed all other persons by federal and state constitutions and laws, and charged the regional centers, established in 1969, with advocacy for, and protection of, these rights. There were suddenly higher expectations for organizations such as Parents and Friends that were providing services for those with disabilities. It was very fortunate that George was a fast learner!

About this time, the University of San Francisco received federal funding to provide a certificate program in the field of Rehabilitation Administration. George enrolled in this two year program. Every four months a one week course was presented on a particular topic such as policies and finance. George would spend a week at USF immersed in the topic and then come back to the Cypress Street Center and implement what he learned. At the end of 2 years, Parents and Friends, Inc. emerged as a professionally run organization more capable of serving the needs of those with developmental disabilities on the Mendocino Coast.

George is an artist and his creative side served him very well as Director of PFI. He was inventive in developing interesting and challenging businesses for the clients of PFI. Various enterprises included a bakery developed by Laura Moyer that supplied cookies to Fort Bragg High School and muffins to local B&B's... a cut flower business... a landscape service... a short lived recycling business... a processing service (applying labels and stuffing envelopes)... and the star of the show, Adirondack Designs.

Russ Pals supervising the woodshop crew at Adirondack Design.



George Griffith continues on Page 3



A View from the Moon by Rick Moon

It has been a busy winter!

As you know, we had a fire at the Furniture Annex in September. The fire caused more damage than is apparent from the outside. Seven trusses interior to the building were damaged by fire and, while inspecting the damage, it was discovered that there was asbestos in the roofing material, linoleum flooring and ceiling drywall. All that had to be removed by a Hazardous Materials team, sealed and shipped to a hazardous waste dump.

Since then we have replaced most of the roof, leaving the back portion open, but sealed, until the backroom, which was destroyed, can be rebuilt. We will also need to replace all the light fixtures and a good deal of the wiring and floor coverings. We are also planning on installing propane heat, replacing the old wood heater as well as replacing one of the roll up doors with a standard glass

business front door, although these will not be covered by insurance.

We expect to receive the final insurance settlement in March and begin repairs immediately. Hopefully we can reopen between April and June, depending on construction. In the meantime we are accepting donations of furniture items at the Paul Bunyan Thrift Store for a grand reopening when the building is ready. Any appropriate donations will be gratefully received as we try to build our inventory back up to sustainable levels.

Besides the Furniture Annex, we received a Rural Development Grant through the City to prepare a study about how we might develop our Cypress Street property to better serve our clients and create at least a minor revenue stream independent of State finances. Leventhal, Schlosser and Newberger architects are working on the plan and we think it will be completed by the end of April. It will include a site survey, biological assessment, geology report and zoning analysis. From this, we will decide on three options, with one primary option, which will then show building and vegetation layout, parking, and more. At this time we expect it will include the Furniture Annex, office space, low income housing units and two small commercial units. When this is complete we will use the study to seek grant monies for low-income housing. We expect to need be-

tween \$2M and \$3M to complete a rebuild plan for Cypress Street but will know more after the study. We also expect that raising the money and completing the plan will be at least a two to three year project.

I would also like to welcome Wynter Berlin-Smith (Job Connection), Rick Bonder (LIFE) and Mari Haddox (LIFE) to our support team. Our support team does an incredible job supporting our clients in living independently, working, and participating in the community. These support professionals don't get the recognition they deserve. Job well done to all and welcome to Wynter, Rick and Mari.

I would also like to thank our donors, sponsor and participants in our fundraising events. Without you and the community our clients lives would be vastly different.

One more thank you to the Board of Directors: Steve Ward, Dan Godeke, Michael Hall, Laurel Ellen, Sage Statham, Jackie Bazor, Betty Gross, Christopher Cottle, Brad Gardner and Melissa Schlafer. These people dedicate their time, energy, expertise, intellect and often their money selflessly with no compensation and little recognition. It is appreciated!

I seem to have run out of room. I hope everyone had a fruitful and productive winter. Let's talk again in the Spring.

Many thanks to our recent and generous donors...

Allan B Carlson
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Progress!

Parents & Friends Inc.

*Creatively Serving People
With Developmental Disabilities Since 1955*

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www.parentsandfriends.org

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*Executive Assistant & Licensing and
Accreditation Specialist, Jessica Dickey*

Bookkeeper, Kathy Connell

PROGRESS! Betty Gross

PROGRAMS & BUSINESSES IN SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY

Coastal Support Services

Program Manager, Terry Hinkle

The Community Connection & 24/7

Program Manager, Leann Pill

L.I.F.E. on the Coast

Program Manager, Harry Rosensteel

The Job Connection

Program Manager, Gisele Reaney

*Paul Bunyan Thrift Shop and Furniture Annex
& Vocational Services*

Program Manager, Amanda Venett

OUR MISSION

The mission of Parents & Friends, Inc. is to provide opportunities for persons with developmental challenges and similar needs to participate fully in our community.

George Griffith continued from Page 1

George hired Russ Pals who set up a woodshop where PFI clients could work safely and create beautiful wood products.

A small note in the Adirondack Design catalogue talked about the nature of Parents and Friends:

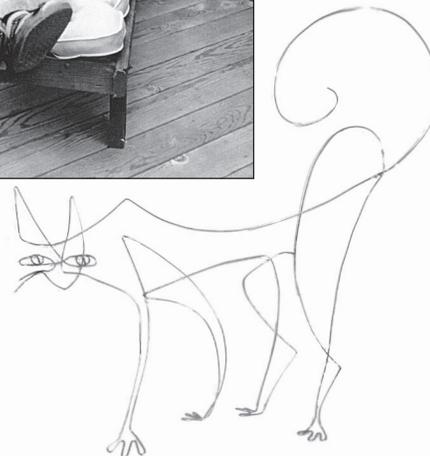
Customers looking for outdoor furniture are often pleasantly surprised when they learn Adirondack Design is owned and operated by a non-profit corporation. Providing employment for people with developmental disabilities is just one of several activities Parents and Friends, Inc. is involved with in fulfilling its mission: "To provide opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities and similar needs to participate fully in our community." A big undertaking? You bet! Each individual presents his or her unique needs, whether it is a place to live, a challenging and satisfying occupation, a full social and recreational life, or all of the above. The individual provides the dream and PFI provides the services and support to help make the dream happen."

George also revitalized our Paul Bunyan Thrift Shop with first the hiring of Claudia Scudder and then Laura Welter. These two managers turned the shop into a significant money-maker for PFI.

Not everyone's needs could be met by the employment programs at Cypress Street. Under George's leadership various other programs were created. Becky Rosenfeld was hired to start the Harrison Street House that served the residential needs of 6 adults. Coastal Support Services was developed to provide assistance to adults living in their own residences in the community. The Community Connection was created to serve people with more severe disabilities. And Linda Rosengarten developed the placement service called the Job Connection for those desiring to work in the community. In his interview, George emphasized how PFI could not have thrived without the many talented people: board members, staff and volunteers, who contributed over the years."

Through all the years, PFI remained solvent when other non-profits fell by the wayside. When George retired in 2002, Parents and Friends, Inc. was a very different organization than it was when he arrived.

In retirement, George enjoys a second career as a very accomplished artist. His wire sculpture can be seen at the Mendocino Art Center. He is featured in the book Artists of the Mendocino Coast by Larry Wagner.



George in his early days with PFI... AdirondackDesigns catalog...one of George's wire sculptures

Deck the Halls!

Good cheer was abundant at PFI Holiday Party

by Meadow Fish



Elf, Mike Casteel, and Santa, Kevin Pearl, give candy canes to PFI Board member, Laurel Ellen and TLC employee Nora Williamson.

The Parents and Friends' annual holiday party was filled with good food, laughter, music and friends. The party was held at the Trinity Lutheran Church. It was a chilly afternoon but the room was warm with seasonal songs led by the Tuesday Music Group. It was warmer still with the arrival of Santa (Kevin Pearl) and his helper Elf (Mike Casteel). The Paul Bunyan Thrift Store received a donation of a beautiful Santa suit that we now have to use in Holidays to come. Santa and his Elf handed out candy canes and "Ho, ho, ho's" to the delight of all.

Many people helped to make the party happen. Meadow was the coordinator; set-up crew was Chris Freitas, Mike Barnes, Mike Berry, Meadow, Peggy, Gisele, and Kathy. Our kitchen organizing elves were Ann, Patsy, Kathy and Meadow.

The Trinity Lutheran Church donated the use of their hall. The Church has also donated space every Tuesday afternoon for the music group activities. We are truly grateful to them. We also thank Fort Bragg Rent-all for giving us a discount on decorations and tablecloths and to the Paul Bunyan Thrift shop for table decorations.

People from other agencies that serve those with developmental disabilities were invited to join us at our party. These included Northstar, A.B.C., Art Explorers, the Redwood Coast Regional Center, and the Transitional Learning Center (TLC). Also attending were PFI Board member, staff, and all those we serve in PFI programs: Coastal Support Services, the Job Connection, L.I.F.E. on the Coast, the Community Connection and the Paul Bunyan Thrift Store.

May the New Year bring blessings to all. We hope that the holidays were warm and filled with joy for all those who celebrate the winter holidays in their own tradition.



Left to right: David Peterson, Lee Riley, Meadow



Cynthia Coleman was one of the chefs

42nd Annual Spaghetti Dinner

In spite of several other community events held that evening, over 200 people stepped out to attend PFI's 42nd Annual Spaghetti Dinner. Over \$6,000 was netted for programs and services provided by PFI.

Cynthia Coleman, Curt Gore, Gerald Roach were the chefs. With helpers, they created a delicious meal of spaghetti with meatballs, antipasto salad and french bread.

Dick Jones assisted Jackie Bazor and others with securing items for the silent auction. A larger than usual number of items were donated by our generous community and \$2,000 was raised at the auction.

Laurel Ellen arranged for volunteers to work the night of the dinner as tickets seller, bus people, bar tenders, servers and cocktail waitresses. Things ran smoothly. Thanks to all of you who helped.

Local businesses made donations to offset the cost of the dinner. A special thanks to:

Anderson Logging
CVS Pharmacy
Fort Bragg Rental
Harvest Market
Old Gold
Safeway
Savings Bank of Mendocino County

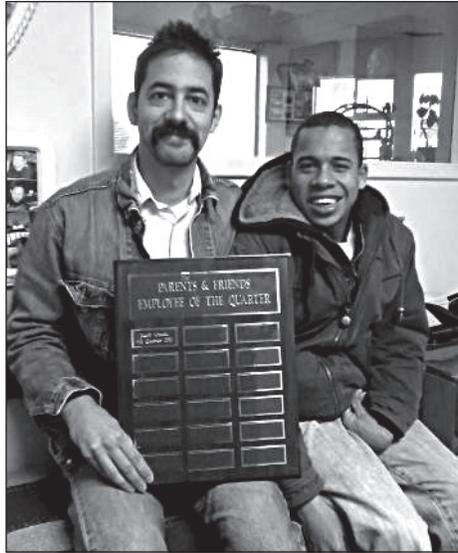
Parents and Friends next fund-raising event will be held on May 5th. Mark the *Holly Tooty Fashion Show and Tea* on your calendar now and don't miss this fun event.

Welcome Chris Cottle



Christopher Cottle is PFI's new Consumer Representative on the Board of Directors. Chris graduated from Mendocino High School and is currently attending College of the Redwoods in Fort Bragg. He has a passion for writing stories and is currently working on a novel. PFI is glad to have Chris on the Board of Directors this year!

Jacob Aranda is Employee of the Quarter



Leann Pill

Jacob Aranda accepting award with Antony Gage

Jacob Aranda has worked for PFI for about a year. Currently he supervises the support staff for Antony Gage as well as working one to one with Antony. Program manager Leann Pill says that Jacob has been a great co-worker since he began with PFI. She continues, "He is what I would say a natural when it comes to this type of work. His attention to detail is outstand-

ing. I could not ask for a better supervisor."

Jacob was born and raised in Chicago. He moved to Fort Bragg two and a half years ago to put his wife through school here. He has been a woodworker most of his life. He studied violin making in Chicago and guitar making in Spain. In addition to his work with PFI, he still builds guitars and repairs musical instruments.

Jacob has this to say about his work with PFI. "Woodworking requires a lot of patience, but with this job I get to work on empathy, sensitivity, and communication skills. Antony and I enjoy playing basketball and frisbee, taking walks by the ocean, playing guitar and singing along to Elvis, and drawing together. I love working with Antony because he is a kind and sensitive, fun-loving young man. Antony and I have done a few woodworking projects together such as building a kite and various home repair projects. It feels wonderful to be a part of the PFI family. They are the kindest, most joyful people I have ever worked with."

We're fortunate to have Jacob on staff with Parents and Friends, Inc.

Mark your calendar!

*Hooty Toity
Fashion Show & Tea*



Saturday, May 5th
Eagles Hall

New Phone System for Parents and Friends

964-4940

Now you can dial 964-4940 to reach most of the programs and services offered by PFI.

The extension numbers for our new Digium phone service are as follows:

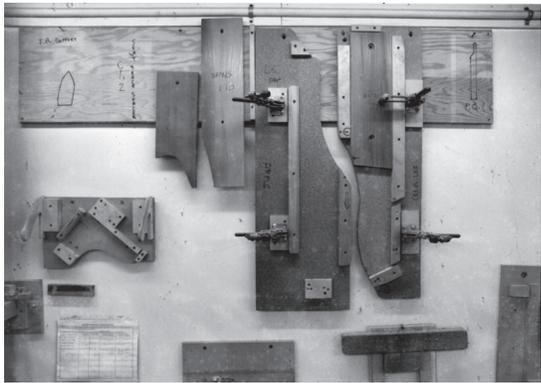
Rick Moon, Executive Director, ex.101
Kathy Connell, Bookkeeper, ex. 102
Jessica Dickey, Licens/ Accred/ Assist, ex. 103
Harry Rosensteel, L.I.F.E. Manager, ex. 104
Gisele Reaney, JOB Connection, Manager, ex .105
Terry Hinkle, Coastal Support, Manager, ex. 106
Ann Bauer, Coastal Support, Asst. Manager, ex. 107
The Paul Bunyan Furniture Annex, ex.108

For the programs and businesses not at the 350 Cypress Street location, the old numbers are still in use:

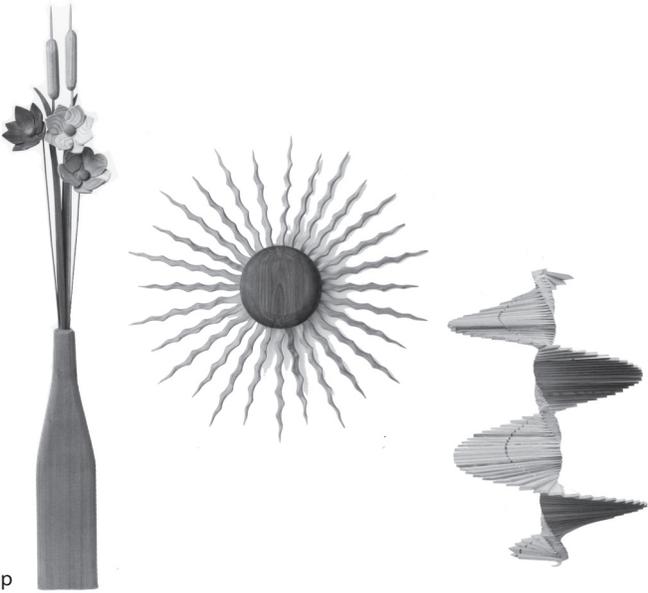
Leann Pill, Community Connection Manager
964-1489
Amanda Venett, Paul Bunyan Thrift Store Manager
964-8542
Paul Bunyan Thrift Store
964-4471

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Jigs used in the Adirondack Design Wood Shop



Products made in the Wood Shop